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PROTECTING LIVESTOCK OWNERS AGAINST FAKE REMEDIES.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

A radio talk by Dr. H. E. Moskey, associate veterinarian, Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration, delivered through Station WRC and 17 other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, at 1:38 p.m., E. S. T., Wednesday, July 3, 1929.

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In considering the food and drugs act, Congress saw the need of protecting our livestock industry against adulterated and misbranded medicinal products for veterinary use.

Therefore, Congress included provisions in the act of 1906 for the control of veterinary preparations as well as preparations intended for human use. In passing the Insecticide Act four years later, Congress gave additional protection to the livestock industry.

As enforced by the Food, Drug and Insecticide Administration of the United States Department of Agriculture, both acts are affording livestock and poultry owners increased protection. Special efforts are now being made to further increase this degree of protection.

During the past two years, the Administration has taken active steps against products shipped in interstate commerce labeled for contagious abortion of cattle, hog cholera, hog flu, fowl cholera, diarrhea of chicks, coccidiosis, Roup or Diphtheria, chicken pox, gapes of chicks, blackhead of turkeys, distemper of dogs, black tongue and running fits of dogs, influenza, distemper and heaves of horses. According to the consensus of present day reliable veterinary medical opinion, there is, I am sorry to say, no drug or mixture of drugs known at the present time which can be considered effective in the treatment of these diseases.

As the result of the recent governmental campaign, a large majority of the products formerly sold for these diseases have been removed from the market.

An outstanding example of one of these preparations alleged to be a cure for contagious abortion was found to consist of nothing more than brown sugar and wheat bran. Nine and one-half pounds of the cure, costing less than 40 cents to produce, was sold for \$5.00. Interstate shipments of this product were seized throughout the United States by Federal inspectors with the result that the product is no longer offered for sale. This firm claimed that before the Government stopped the sale of the product, their monthly sales were about \$15,000. The stopping of the sale of this fraud alone is saving dairymen at least \$180,000 a year.

Many other preparations on the market receive constant attention by the law-enforcing officials. These include products labeled worm expellers, mineral mixtures, stock powders, conditioners and tonics for livestock, frequently represented to the public by manufacturers with false and fraudulent claims.

One of these preparations recently examined by the Administration, labeled "Worm Eradicator," was found upon chemical analysis to contain approximately 95 per cent water and nothing that could be considered effective against any type of worms in poultry or any other animal.

Another so-called remedy was described as a preventive and cure for hog cholera, worms and all inflammatory and contagious diseases peculiar to swine. Further, the claim was made that it not only cures indigestion and purifies the blood, but will do all that we have already mentioned and even more. It is obvious that claims of this character are beyond the therapeutic possibilities of any drug or mixture of drugs.

Preparations labeled as worm expellers for poultry or other animals imply the promise of being effective for all types of intestinal worms. Drugs for the removal of internal worms and parasites are more or less specific in their action and there is no one product that can be truthfully offered to the public as an expeller for all types of worms. Products labeled in this manner are considered misbranded unless the particular kind of worm or parasite is prominently mentioned for which the product has proved to be effective.

Unscrupulous manufacturers and distributors of fake remedies are crowding the advertising spaces in magazines, newspapers and other publications and are sending forth large numbers of circulars which promise the prevention, treatment or cure of contagious or infectious diseases for which science has been unable to find any medicinal prevention, treatment or cure. Inspectors visiting drug stores and general stores in a community of livestock owners are constantly confronted with labels appearing on these preparations which in substance urge the farmer to buy them and stop the losses which he is sustaining.

The volume of business done by manufacturers of such preparations amounts to millions of dollars every year. The farmer and livestock owner pays the bill, but more serious than paying out good money for worthless products is the fact that he is without proper protection when he relies upon the products to be of real help to him. This false sense of security is likely to result in the spread of diseases throughout an entire community before proper scientific methods of control are used.

Various methods of procedure are followed by the Administration to give livestock owners protection from useless or misbranded remedies. In some instances it may be necessary to institute criminal proceedings against the manufacturer or distributor. While the necessity for legal action will no doubt always exist, I am happy to say that more and more manufacturers desire voluntarily to remove the misbranded articles from the market or to revise their labels, eliminating such curative and other unjustified claims for which their products can not be truthfully represented to the public.